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**The Patent Office
Patents Directorate**

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Your Reference: RAL/EP/P353080GB
Application No: GB0520998.6

23 December 2005

Dear Sirs

**Patents Act 1977:
Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 and 18(3)**

Latest date for reply:

19 October 2006

I enclose two copies of my search and examination report and a copy of the citations.

By the above date you should either file amendments to meet the objections in the report or make observations on them. If you do not, the application may be refused.

Other search results

If you have applied to another patent office for a patent for this invention you will be receiving from them the results of their search. If you decide to proceed with the present application you are asked to provide me with a copy of any such official search report; or to email identifying details of the cited documents (including any category assigned in the report) to the email address above.

Cut-off date This request applies to search reports that you have received before the date when you send a response to our first examination report under section 18(3) or section 18(4); if you make no response to an initial section 18(4) report the cut-off date is two months after the date of that report. Tell us about a search report sooner rather than later if that would allow it to be considered during our first examination.

[†]Use of E-mail: Please note that e-mail should be used for correspondence only.

Exceptions You do not have to supply details of a search report that (1) shows a nil response, or (2) has been published by WIPO or EPO, or (3) you have already supplied to us on a previous GB application.

Publication

I estimate that, provided you have met all the formal requirements, preparations for publication of your application will be completed soon after **14 March 2006**. At this time you will receive a letter confirming the exact date when the preparations for publication will be completed. This letter will also tell you the publication number and date of publication of your application.

Withdrawal/amendment

If you wish to withdraw your application before it is published you must do so before the preparations for publication are complete. **WARNING** – after preparations for publication are complete it will NOT be possible to withdraw your application from publication.

If you wish to file amended claims for inclusion with the published application you must do so before the preparations for publication are completed. If you write to the Office less than 3 weeks before 14 March 2006 please mark your letter prominently:

"URGENT - PUBLICATION IMMINENT".

Yours faithfully



Monty Siddique
Examiner

Important information about combined search and examination

I also ask that you take note of the following points. These might have a bearing on the future stages of your application because the examination report has been sent to you before your application has been published.

- (a) You may file voluntary amendments before making a full response to my examination report. We will publish with your application any new or amended claims you file voluntarily or as a full response, provided that they are received before preparations for publication are completed. It would help us when you file amendments before publication if you could **prominently indicate** in a covering letter whether or not the amendments are intended as a full response to the examination report.
- (b) If you file a full response to the examination report before your application is published I will consider it as soon as possible. However, if this would disrupt the publication of your application, I would have to delay



taking any action until the application had been published. This delay could be up to 3 months, depending upon when we receive your response.

- (c) There is another situation when there might be a delay between you filing a full response and the Patent Office responding to it. This would arise if you met all my objections but your application had not or had only recently been published. I could not report the outcome of my re-examination until I was satisfied that the search was complete for documents published before the priority date of your invention and that anybody interested in the application has had three months following publication of the application to make observations on the patentability of your invention.
- (d) Provided that the requirements of the Act have been met, I can send your application to grant as early as three months after publication. Before doing so I will bring the original search up to date and raise with you any further objection that might result from this top-up search. However, there is a possibility that at that time I may not have access to all the patent applications published after the priority date of your invention and of possible relevance to your application. If this is the case I would have to complete the search after grant and if necessary raise any new found novelty objection then.

Application No: GB0520998.6

Examiner: Monty Siddique

Claims searched: 1-6

Date of search: 22 December 2005

Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1, 2, 4, 5 at least	US2004/0202824 A1 (AISIN SEIKI) paragraphs 0031, 0032, 0034, 0046; as door trims; backing layer or substrate 7 integrated with decor skin layer 6 by foamed layer 5
X	1-5 at least	US6544449 B1 (MAGNA INTERIOR SYSTEMS INC.) foamed layer between applique/decors 26, 28 and substrate 22
X	1-5 at least	WO01/25055 A1 (LEAR CORPORATION) figures 2, 4, 5; intermediate foamed material 18 integrating substrate 10 with applique 12, 14 by moulding (indirect connection)
A	1	US6409947 B1 (TEXTRON)
A	1	JP2005119404 A (KASAI KOGYO KK) foam 24 integrating substrate or rib 22 to decor 24
A	1	JP11070604 A (I & F KK)

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^X:

B5A; E1J

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC⁰⁷

B29C; B29D; B32B; B60J; B60R

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

WPI EPODOC



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Page 1/2

Patents Act 1977

Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 & 18(3)

Plurality of invention

1. Your claims define two separate inventions not forming a single inventive concept. The inventions are:

- (a) as set out in claim 1 and claims appended thereto and relating to an automotive interior trim part and comprising a substrate layer joined to an appliqué through a moulded intermediate cover and capable of being made from methods other than those set out in claims 7 and 13 and
- (b) as defined in claims 7 and 13 and claims appended thereto and relating to methods of moulding automotive interior trim parts comprising substrates joined to appliqués through moulded intermediate cover parts.

The above opinion is based on the findings that the common features of the independent claims are anticipated by the cited prior art and that the article of claim 1 is capable of being manufactured, as also evident from the citations, by methods other than those claimed herein.

You will need to amend your claims, so that they relate to only one invention or inventive concept. You will also need to make consequential amendments to the description.

Scope of search

2. In accordance with Section 17(6), only the first of these inventions has been searched. The other invention can be searched if you wish. In this case you will have to file a further Form 9A/77.

What this report covers

3. I have not been able to consider the novelty or obviousness of the unsearched invention.

Novelty

4. The invention as defined in claims 1-5 is not new because it has already been disclosed in each of the following documents:

Your ref : RAL/EP/P353080GB
Application No : GB0520998.6

Date of report: 23 December 2005
Page 2 / 2

[Examination Report contd.]

US2004/0202824 A1 (AISIN SEIKI) paragraphs 0031, 0032, 0034, 0046; as door trims; backing layer or substrate 7 integrated with decor skin layer 6 by foamed layer 5

US6544449 B1 (MAGNA INTERIOR SYSTEMS INC.) foamed layer between applique/decor 26, 28 and substrate 22

WO01/25055 A1 (LEAR CORPORATION) figures 2, 4, 5; intermediate foamed material 18 integrating substrate 10 with appliqué/decor 12, 14 by moulding (indirect connection)

The inclusion of claim 5 suggests that provision of a decorative material is only an aspect of the appliqué. This gives the impression that the meaning of the word “appliqué” is required to be construed more widely. Since the precise meaning of this word is somewhat speculative, only those documents, disclosing a reference to a décor, have been cited. A further search may be considered later.